

St. Mary Rehabilitation Working Group Meeting
9:00 – 11:00 a.m. August 17, 2006
Teleconference Meeting

Welcome and Introductions:

Members Present on conference call:

Don Wilson, Michael DesRosier, Dolores Plumage, Paul Tuss, Dave Peterson, Mike Barthel, Gary Anderson, Randy Reed, Max Maddox, Marko Manoukian, Bud Mavencamp (for Kevin Salsbary), Jim Rector

Staff & others present on conference call: Larry Mires, Brandi Beecher, Paul Azevedo, Judy Edwards, Will Hammerquist, Don Swenson, Art Kleinjan, Jeff Jensen

Review and Approval of Meeting notes:

- SMWG approved July 6th video conference meeting notes by consensus with suggested changes from Paul A.

State of Montana In-Kind Review

- Paul A. reviewed the total State contribution of in-kind match to the SMWG.
 - Total time & personnel \$504,958 (2004-2006)
 - Total Grant, Time & personnel \$947,142
- Paul A. also provided a breakdown of FY06 Federal appropriations to Reclamation for the St. Mary Rehabilitation Project.

Discussion on Engineering Fees

- Discussion on bill from Great West Engineering that was paid by Glacier County and to be considered Glacier County's contribution to SMWG
- Larry said he would get a letter to Glacier County confirming the contribution.
- Michael DesRosier said Glacier County is ready to pay the GWE invoice.

Executive Director's Report

- Larry reported he continues to work with Montana's Congressional staff on Senate Bill 3563 and House Bill 5705.
- Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will hold a Field Hearing on September 1 in Havre to discuss SB 3563.
- Reported display trailer brakes caught on fire while traveling to Montana Water Resources meeting in Sidney. Repair work cost \$359.65.
- Larry and Paul A. attended National Water Resources Summer Conference on July 25-29. Felt it was a good opportunity to network and received several general comments on legislation. General feeling was it is going to take a lot of work to get legislation passed and it may take more than one try.
- Upcoming Conferences: USBR Managing for Excellence in the 21st Century in Salt Lake on September 19-20. National Water Resources Association Water & Money Conference in San Diego on September 22.
- Larry reported Milk River Joint Board of Control has decided to hire a manager, which will cut their contribution to the SMWG from \$1 per acre to .50 cents.
- Gary A. questioned comments Larry received on difficulties faced with passing legislation this year. Larry said a portion of the Legislation is expected to be passed in an Omnibus bill that will deal with catastrophic failure of the St. Mary System and also something to assist Blackfeet Tribe with water compacting issues.

Draft Meeting Notes

- Paul A. added that the draft legislation contains a lot of provision and is asking for a lot. It is also an election year which makes it difficult to predict the outcome.

Financial Report

- Paul T. reviewed the financial report. Collected \$30,898 in SMWG donation during the past couple months.
- Current balance in basin account is \$124,332 and only outstanding expense is the \$359.65 bill for repairs to display trailer.

Travel

- SMWG approved sending Larry to the NWRA conference in San Diego and USBR conference in Salt Lake.
- Larry reported he is planning to attend Rocky Boy's North Central Montana Regional Water System ground breaking ceremony at Tiber Dam on August 31. He encouraged SMWG members to attend as well.
- Discussion on taking display trailer to ground breaking ceremony. Larry will check with organizer's of Rocky Boy project.

Field Hearing

- Larry reported Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Field Hearing will be held on September 1 at the Montana State University Northern Student Union Building from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
- The hearing location was set by Senator Domenici's office. SMWG requested Babb/St. Mary area, however health concerns limited the Senator's travel.
- Written comments must be submitted within 10 working days of the Senate Field Hearing however group agreed should have them submitted within five days, by September 8th. There is no limit to length of written comments but recommendations are five pages or less. All written comments must be submitted electronically or hard copies can be given to Sara Converse.
- Oral testimony will be limited to five minutes, and only those officially invited by the Energy and Natural Resources Committee will be allowed to testify. Oral testimony must be submitted prior to the hearing.
- Based on information available to date, the Committee will invite the following individuals to give oral testimony:
 - Lt. Governor Bohlinger
 - SMWG Co-Chair Randy Reed
 - Fort Belknap Tribes Representative
 - Blackfeet Tribe Representative
 - Havre Mayor Bob Rice representing municipalities
 - USBR representative
- Paul A and Larry will develop a project facts sheet to assist with writing written comments.
- Dolores suggested having someone other than Mayor Bob Rice represent municipalities.
- Larry said written comments from other municipal representatives are critical.
- Dave P. added Mayor Rice is representing all Hi-Line Municipalities, not just Havre.
- Larry will send out press release on the Senate Field Hearing.
- SMWG to develop a list of questions in which would like to be asked during the hearing.

Draft Meeting Notes

- Don W. suggested to stress in the press release that the oral testimony is by invitation only.
- Will H. asked if National Water Resources Association or Family Farm Alliance will be supplying any written testimony.

Summary of Agreements

- SMWG approved July 6th video conference meeting notes by consensus with suggested changes from Paul A.
- SMWG approved sending Larry to the NWRA conference in San Diego and USBR conference in Salt Lake.

Summary of Action Items

- Larry said he would get a letter to Glacier County confirming their contribution to the SMWG by paying the bill from Great West Engineering.
- Paul A and Larry will develop a project facts sheet to assist with writing written comments.
- SMWG to develop a list of questions in which would like to be asked during the hearing.
- SMWG members will to develop written testimony and submit by September 5th.

Next Meeting

- September 1, 2006, 9 to 11:30 a.m. at Havre's City Hall in the Emergency Operations Center.
- Senate Field Hearing September 1, 2006, 1- 3 p.m. at MSU-Northern Student Union Building.